



September 8, 2009

Kara Laney
Division on Earth and Life Studies
Board on Agriculture and Natural Resources
Natural Resources Council, National Academy of Science

Dear Ms. Laney,

As a follow-up to the concerns I outlined in my previous communication to you, I would appreciate if you could address for us the following questions regarding the scope and limitations of the NAS/NRC review you were hired by USDA to conduct. As I previously stated, there are many representatives within the California and Federal Legislatures and also with the agriculture community who believe the NAS review will be an independent review of the scientific merits of the LBAM Reclassification Petitions submitted by Harder et al. 2008 and PANNA 2008. They believe NAS will broadly address whether LBAM should or should not be reclassified and whether or not eradication can be achieved. I feel it is important for the actual scope and limitations to be clearly articulated.

We see that the makeup of your Review Committee did not change despite the concerns we and PANNA raised regarding its composition. I would appreciate greatly if you provide as detailed answers as you can to the following questions. We feel these are important issues to clarify if there is going to be any trust given to the findings of the NAS/NRC review.

My sincere regards.

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Please clarify for us the scope and limitations of the NAS review of LBAM? Specifically we are interested in knowing if NAS/NRC will be conducting an independent scientific evaluation of the following:

1. What is the most appropriate classification for LBAM?
2. Does the LBAM Reclassification Petition of Harder et al. (2008) provide a scientific basis for reclassifying LBAM as a minor pest?
3. Does the LBAM reclassification Petition of Harder et al. (2008) provide a scientific basis that LBAM constitutes a minor insect and need not be eradicated?
4. Is eradication of LBAM feasible?
5. Have the products that are proposed to be used in the LBAM eradication program been thoroughly tested to ensure they will not present a public or environmental health hazard and will be effective at eradicating LBAM?
6. Is LBAM easily and cost-effectively managed in agriculture systems as alleged by the Petitioners?
7. Is there scientific support or evidence that indicates that California residents will use more pesticides around their homes if LBAM is not eradicated?
8. How can the objectivity of the NAS/NRC review be assured when there appears to be at least two Committee members representing the position of USDA and none representing the position of the Petitioners?
9. How will you make clear to the public the breadth of scope and limitations of the NAS/NRC review?